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MINUTES OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
WITH COMMUNICATIONS AND LEGISLATIVE LIAISON COMMITTEE
ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT
January 4, 2024, 12:00 p.m.

Director Tran called the Communications and Legislative Liaison Committee meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. in the District Conference Room C-2. Public access was also provided via Zoom webinar. The Secretary called the roll and reported a quorum as follows:

Committee Members
Denis Bilodeau
Van Tran
Roger Yoh (arrived 12:04 pm)
Bruce Whitaker
Steve Sheldon

OCWD Staff
Mike Markus – General Manager
Gina Ayala – Director of Public Affairs
Crystal Nettles – Principal Communications Specialist
Alicia Harasty – Legislative Affairs Liaison
Dani Berch – Communications Specialist
Leticia Villarreal – Assistant District Secretary

Alternates
Valerie Amezcua
Natalie Meeks (absent)
Dina Nguyen (absent)
Vacant
Cathy Green

CONSENT CALENDAR
The Consent Calendar was approved upon motion by Director Green, seconded by Director Whitaker and carried [5-0] as follows:
Ayes –Bilodeau, Tran, Whitaker, Amezcua, Green

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the December 7, 2023 Communications/Legislative Liaison Committee meetings are approved as presented.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

2. State Legislative Update

OCWD Consultants, Jason Gonsalves and Don Gilbert, provided recommendations to prepare for the 2024 Legislative session to gain PFAS funding and other OCWD goals.

3. Federal Legislative Update

Federal Consultant Eric Sapirstein reported on progress towards an exemption for water entities from PFAS liability and funding for PFAS cleanup. He also provided information on a federal bill dealing with water supply. Legislative Affairs Liaison Alicia Harasty shared that OCWD does not typically take positions on bills that have not been dropped but advised this potential bill aligns completely with OCWD's legislative policies to gain water supply at Prado Dam. Staff recommended that OCWD write a support letter in concept to Congresswoman Grace F. Napolitano and copy the rest of OCWD's delegation.

Upon motion by Director Tran, seconded by Director Whitaker and carried [5-0], the Committee Recommended for approval at the January 17 Board meeting: Write a letter of support of concept.

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Ayes: Bilodeau, Tran, Yoh, Whitaker, Sheldon

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

4. Children's Water Education Festival Update

Communications Specialist Dani Berch provided an update on the 2024 Children's Water Education Festival. She reported there are 5,754 students currently registered representing 213 classes and 23 cities. She noted there will be 25 presenters and shared that staff would continue to solicit sponsors, presenters and volunteers and will continue to provide updates to the committee monthly.

5. Public Affairs Outreach Report (December)

Director of Public Affairs Gina Ayala provided an overview of outreach for December 2023 and highlighted 2023 accomplishments:

December

- In December there were 166 tour guests and 4 speakers bureau engagements

2023 in Review

- The District hosted 117 tours of the GWRS (99 in person & 17 virtual), Lab hosted 1 tour with 18 guests, Prado hosted 6 tours with 188 guests, FHQ hosted 5 tours with 74 guests.
- Groundwater Adventure Tour had 74 guests
- OCWD had 82 speaker's bureau engagements
- 4 webinars, 784 live attendees and 1,881 YouTube views (& counting)
- School education programs: Next Generation Water Leaders had 491 students among 15 programs. This program for middle and high school students is in collaboration with Inside the Outdoors. Children's Water Education Festival returned in-person with 4,000 students in attendance. Prado Wetland Field Trip virtual program had 851 students among 33 programs.
- OCWD received 19 awards in 2023
- The OCWD History book was updated

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 12:41 p.m.

DocuSigned by:
Van Tran
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Van Tran, Vice Chair